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NOTICES OF THE
MODERN
SAMARITANS

JACOB ESH SHELABY

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Shelaby

NOTES

MODERN SLAVES

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE

OF A SLAVE

BY J. H. ROBERTS

MR. E. T. ROGERS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE

BOSTON

WILLIAM L. GUNTER AND SON, 21 N. STATE ST.

Printed and Published by W. L. GUNTER AND SON

1852

NOTICES
OF THE
MODERN SAMARITANS,

ILLUSTRATED BY

INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE

OF

JACOB ESH SHELABY.

GATHERED FROM HIM, AND TRANSLATED

BY

MR. E. T. ROGERS.

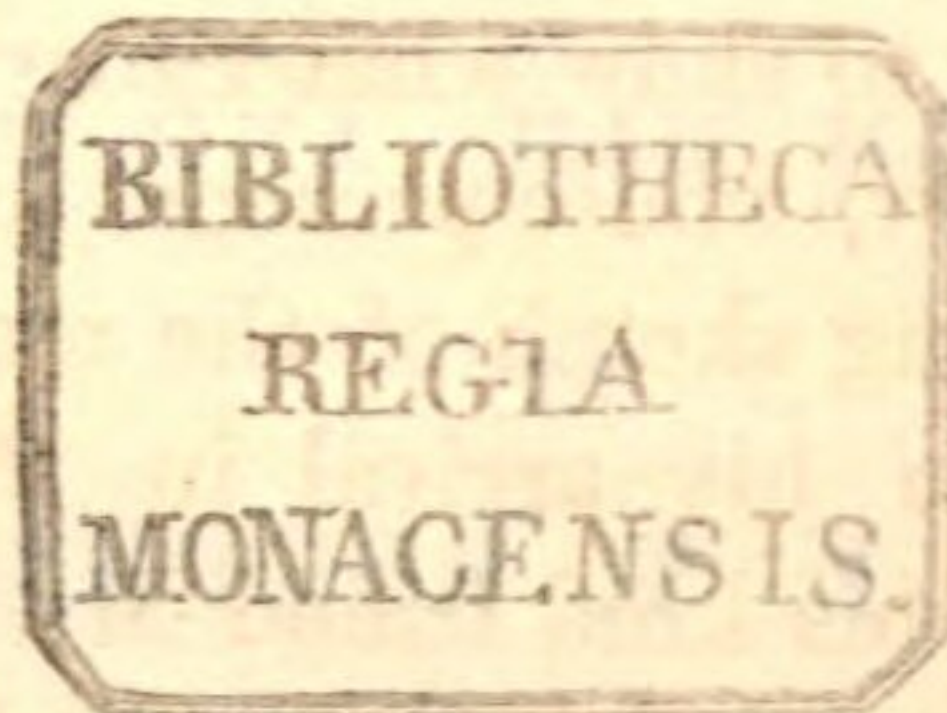
Do not enquire of occurrences how or why they happened; for that which is decreed
must come to pass. *Arabic Proverb.*

LONDON:

SAMPSON LOW AND SON, 47, LUDGATE HILL,

English and American Booksellers and Publishers.

1855.



LONDON :

WILSON and OGLVY,
57, Skinner Street.

RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

BY THE Rev. GEORGE FISK.

HAVING visited the Holy Land, and made myself somewhat acquainted with the state and condition of its various inhabitants, both Jewish and Gentile, I was glad to be among the first to welcome and to show what Christian kindness I could to JACOB ESH SHELABY, whose personal history is a prominent feature in the following sketch of the more modern history of the Samaritans. On his arrival in this country, he was introduced to me by his kind friend Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers; and his intelligent, earnest, and manly character of mind and heart, coupled with the interest I felt in the mission on which he came, soon awakened within me a sincere friendship for him, of which I am sure he is worthy; and I should be greatly surprised if any Christian could read the following brief narrative without sharing the feelings which I cherish towards him and the small remnant of an ancient and peculiar people of which he is the authorised representative amongst us.

I do not imagine that my name or recommendation will add much weight to the touching statements in the following

pages ; but those who know me will be sure that I would not endorse either a person or a narrative without the fullest conviction that in so doing I am only discharging what I account to be a Christian duty.

I hope this little work will be read by many ; and that those who read will remember, and feel also, that what concerns *man* concerns *them* ; in which case, the interest already taken in the cause of the Samaritans by the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Earl of Bradford, the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, and many other influential persons, will extend itself widely, and Jacob esh Shelaby will return to his own people convinced that our Christianity is not a mere name or a shadow ; and with such a contribution in aid of the urgent necessities of the Samaritans, as may fill their hearts with gratitude to Almighty God.

Earnestly praying for God's blessing on the mission of my friend Jacob, and for grace to enable him and his people to confess Christ as the one Mediator between God and man, I cordially recommend the following narrative to the perusal and consideration of the Christian public.

GEORGE FISK,

PREBENDARY OF LICHFIELD, AND

MINISTER OF CHRIST CHAPEL,

ST. JOHN'S WOOD, LONDON.

RECOMMENDATORY PREFACE,

BY THE REV. C. MARRIOTT.

THERE is little for one resident in England to add to the testimonies of those who have known the Samaritan people and their representative, Yakub esh Shelaby, in Palestine. I may venture, however, to invite attention to this the first effort of one of that nation to communicate with the British public, as having a just claim to a favourable reception. From what I have seen of Yakub himself, I entertain the hope that his residence in England may prove permanently beneficial to himself, and through him to his people ; and, isolated as they now are, they have an especial need of protection and assistance, while the Jews, and each division of Christians, have other communities, near or at a distance, of their own religion. It is well that they should see in us those dispositions toward the distressed which our religion certainly teaches, and which ought to be found in all who profess it. My conversation has been chiefly with Mr. Rogers, from whom I learned much that was new to me with respect to Palestine and the Samaritans ; but, by adopting a simple style of grammar, and carefully observing what is understood, I have been able to

converse with Yakub himself in English, and have found much to interest me in his conversation. The present seems to be *the opportunity* with his people, and it ought not to be let pass without doing something for their welfare.

C. MARRIOTT,

FELLOW OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD, AND
VICAR OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, OXFORD.

Oxford, April 29, 1855.

P R E F A C E.

HAVING known the subject of the following Memoir in his own country, and heard from his uncle, Abu Shelabi, the narrative of the forced conversion of his cousin Isaac to the religion of the Koran, I cannot withhold my testimony to the authenticity of the following narrative, and a word of hearty sympathy for the sufferings of a small remnant of an ancient and once powerful people, whose continued existence around the chief seat of their fathers' worship furnishes a striking evidence for the historical truth of the Sacred Records, scarcely less remarkable than the history of their old antagonists—the Jews. The memorials of patriarchs and prophets in the vicinity of Nablous are very numerous, and authenticated by the continuous testimony of Jews and Samaritans from the remotest period: and Jacob's well, Joseph's tomb, the sepulchres of Phinehas and his father Eleazar in Mount Ephraim, of Caleb and Joshua in *Kipher Hares*, and, above all, the two Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, of the latter of which it was said nearly 2000 years ago, “our fathers worshipped in this

mountain; — all these and other places in the vicinity of Nablous, of which the Samaritans are the hereditary guardians, are so connected with recollections, and so blended with the facts of the sacred narrative of the very earliest books in the Bible, that they may yet have an office to perform subsidiary to other evidences for the genuineness and authenticity of those ancient books, which it is too much the fashion of modern critics to disparage or despise as comparatively recent compilations; whereas the geography of the Bible is so woven into the very texture of the history, that it seems impossible to reconcile the entire harmony and consistency and minute accuracy of the former with the hypothesis of the fabrication of the latter: and I apprehend that one who had passed a few days in investigating the archæology of Nablous and its environs, under the guidance of the Levite Amran and Yakub esh Shelabi, would think it as reasonable to question the account, *e. g.*, of Abimelech's conspiracy with the men of Shechem, or any other facts in its ancient history, as to dispute, in sight of Cressy or Agincourt, of Bannockburn or Marston Moor, the great historical facts enacted in those memorable fields.

As the following notices of the Samaritans relate exclusively to very recent times, some account of their origin and ancient history and traditions may not be unacceptable in this place.

In the narrative of the deportation of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, contained in the 2d Book of Kings, we are informed that the depopulated country was colonised by Assyrians and Syrians, who, under the instruction

of one of the Hebrew priests, adopted a mixed form of worship, combining the fear of the Lord with the service of their own gods, the ancient idols of Chaldæa and Syria.

The Samaritans, it must here be observed, claim for themselves a far more ancient and respectable origin. They profess, in fact, to be a remnant of the ten tribes who returned from their captivity and settled in their ancient seats; and while they call themselves "Beni Israel"—"Children of Israel"—they trace their origin chiefly to the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, but believe themselves to possess a branch of the Levitical tribe, by whom their services have been conducted throughout all generations, although the comparatively recent failure of the Aaronic family has precluded the possibility of their offering sacrifice, and obliged them to confine their ministrations to such services as may be legally performed by a simple Levite.

They date their separation from the Jews as far back as the time of Eli, the High Priest in Shilo, who is an object of their special execration, as having first introduced division into the inheritance of the Lord, which had been before united in one federal bond, by their common worship in Mount Gerizim, the place divinely appointed, according to their reading of Deuteronomy (xxvii. 4), as that which God had chosen to place His name there—the only legitimate seat of the worship of Jehovah, and the only actual seat, as they maintain, from the time of Joshua to the days of Eli.

This Eli, not being of the priestly family, as they truly

allege, *i. e.* not of the family of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, to whom the covenant of an everlasting priesthood was given, but of the collateral branch of Ithamar, the brother of Eleazar, none of whose family appear in the priestly genealogies in the Book of Chronicles (vii. 3—15, 49—53, compare xxiv.), having usurped the office of High Priest, their ancestors continued steadfast in their allegiance to their legitimate priesthood, maintained the true worship in Mount Gerizim, in custody of their most sacred treasure, which they believe themselves still to possess, viz. a copy of the Pentateuch written by Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the Priest. Such is their own account of their origin, contained, together with many curious particulars of their subsequent history, in their Book of Joshua.

Their subsequent history, as far as it is authenticated by trustworthy writers, may be soon told. On the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, their rejection of the proffered services of the Samaritans to aid them in rebuilding the temple, still further exasperated the old enmity; and a defection of a large number of Jews, among whom was Joiada, son of Eliashib the high priest, who had married a daughter of Sanballat, strengthened the ranks of the Samaritans. It was for this Joiada that his father-in-law, by permission of Alexander the Great, erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, which served as a refuge and sanctuary for the disaffected Jews from Jerusalem. The Samaritans were conquered and their temple destroyed by John Hyrcanus, but they still continued to maintain their worship in that Mount, with occasional interruptions, until they were expelled by

the Emperor Justinian for acts of violence against the Christians of Neapolis, when a garrison of Roman soldiers was placed in a castle on the summit of the hill, where some ruins may still be seen,—which M. de Saulcy, however, is disposed to refer rather to the temple than to the fort.

The small community which still clings with such pertinacity to the place where their fathers worshipped, is well typified by that ruined and dismantled fragment, so venerable in its decay. God grant that the few remaining stones of the crumbling edifice may, by the power of the Divine Architect, be rescued from ruin to be built up as lively stones in His spiritual temple, to which He Himself in the days of His earthly sojourn, and His Apostles soon after His ascension, converted a large multitude both of men and women of Neapolis, from which city He subsequently raised up one of the earliest and ablest apologists, Justin Martyr, whose important services to our common faith we have now an opportunity of acknowledging in this, his townsman, a representative of an ancient race, for whom, as pertaining to Israel after the flesh, it may be designed that “through our mercy they also may obtain mercy.”

The claims of the Samaritan community on the sympathy and generosity of the British public consist in this, that they have been grievously injured and oppressed by a Power with which this country is now allied in a just and righteous quarrel, the result of which will probably be to perpetuate the domination of that Power in Syria for an indefinite period. The

Government, through Lord Clarendon, have nobly interposed to protect this hitherto friendless tribe from a repetition of the cruel spoliation to which they have been subjected. It remains for private liberality—seldom appealed to in vain in this country—to reinstate them in the position in which they formerly stood, and from which they have been reduced to a state of most abject poverty.

GEORGE WILLIAMS, B.D.

SENIOR FELLOW AND VICE-PROVOST OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
WARDEN OF ST. COLUMBA'S COLLEGE, IRELAND;
AND FORMERLY CHAPLAIN TO THE LATE BISHOP
ALEXANDER, AT JERUSALEM.

King's College, Cambridge,
May 1, 1855.

THE
MODERN SAMARITANS.

IN order to the due understanding of the following history, it is necessary to explain something of the state of the government of the district of *Djebal Nablous* or the Nablous mountains.

The seat of government is the town of Nablous, situated in a beautiful valley between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim: it contains from 12000 to 14000 inhabitants, of whom by far the greater proportion are Mohammedans of a very fierce and fanatical disposition; the rest are about 300 or 400 Christians of the Greek Orthodox Church, eight or ten Jewish families, and the Samaritans, who number 195 souls. There are in Djebal Nablous four great factions, from one of which the *Mutsellim* or Governor is generally appointed; they are the Abd ul Hādy, the Jerrār, the Rayān, and the Tokan. The Abd ul Hady family has its stronghold in Arabeh, a walled village with iron gates, situated at about twenty miles north-west of the town of Nablous. The Jerrar has its stronghold in Sennoor, a fortified village at about fifteen miles due north

of Nablous; and each has a large number of followers in almost every village of the district, these two families having sprung from the peasantry. The Tokan family has its stronghold in the black tents of the Arabs, from which it sprang; it can bring much more physical force to bear upon any engagement, in consequence of its influence amongst the kindred tribes of the desert. The Rayan also has much influence amongst the Arab tribes, having its origin from the stock in the district of Jamaeen, near Nablous to the west.

When, after any offence, a Governor, from his inability to satisfy the rapacity of the Effendis of Council and other followers of the Pasha at head-quarters, is put out of office, some member of a rival faction immediately repairs thither, and with large sums of money ingratiates himself into the favour of the Effendis, Secretaries, &c., who speak well of him to the Pasha, and he is then installed as succeeding Governor. He then uses all means in his power, foul or fair, to reimburse himself for his great outlay in obtaining the official title. He with impunity levies impositions upon all who have too little influence to be able to complain. It devolves upon him to appoint the Sheikhs or Chiefs of the villages: those who were already in office under his predecessor are allowed to remain if they make suitable and sufficient presents at the time of his accession; otherwise, the offices are given to those who make larger offers.

After this brief outline the following may be better understood.

E. T. R.

PERSONAL NARRATIVE
OF
JACOB ESH SHELABY.

Our family, the *Denfeeyeh*, was once very extensive in Nablous, Gaza, and Jaffa. My ancestors possessed landed property in the neighbourhood of Nablous; some were merchants, and from time immemorial one or more have always been in some sort of employment in the service of the Mutsellim under the Turkish Government.

My grandfather, "Joseph esh Shelaby," the eldest of three brothers, was Nazir and Sărrăff, Inspector and Manager of the Government Treasury in Nablous; his brother "Jacob" was a rich merchant, and "Abd es Samery," the youngest of the three, was Secretary of the Government Stores in the same district. My grandfather, after serving faithfully under twenty-seven successive Governors, died in A.H. 1222 (A.D. 1805), leaving issue a boy of ten years old, named Shelaby. About a week after his death, he was disinterred by the Governor of Nablous for the sake of his

*

signet ring ;* but his brother Jacob, shrewdly anticipating some such project, had previously smashed the stone of the signet.

A relation named Asmar now took the management of the Treasury, and remained in office for the period of eight years, when the then recently victorious rival Mutsellim Moossa Bek *et Tokan*† lay wait for him and shot him. The dying body was carried home, and a few minutes afterwards Moossa Bek paid a visit of assumed condolence, but brought with him a phial of otto of roses, which, as he poured it upon the wound, caused instant death. This circumstance first roused the suspicion that the Mutsellim was himself the murderer, which was strengthened almost to confirmation by the fact of his gun having been recently discharged, and by Abd es Samery (the secretary above alluded to) being found hidden in a charcoal cellar, whither he had escaped from his cousin's murderer.

Abd es Samery now took the management of the Treasury, in A.H. 1228 (A.D. 1811), and with it the care of the whole Samaritan community, which had been reduced almost to penury during the arbitrary government of Moossa Bek *et Tokan* and his predecessor Abd ul Hady ; he took his nephew Shelaby under his especial care, and married him to a girl of

* In the East, more value is attached to the impression of a seal than to a signature, which may be more easily forged.

† I shall continue to attach the family name to that of the Governor, that it may be known to which of the rival factions he may belong.

good family, by whom he had one son, born in the year 1244 (A.D. 1829); he named him Jacob. I am that Jacob esh Shelaby.

In about the year 1241 (A.D. 1826), Moossa Bek *et Tokan* was summoned by the Pasha to Damascus, where he was poisoned; when his uncle Mustafa Pasha *et Tokan* took the Governorship of Nablous, and remained in office for about a year and a half, during which time he was fully as tyrannical and oppressive as his predecessors. After his removal, a Turk* named Hussein Aga was appointed, whose coming seemed to put new life into the poor oppressed Samaritans, for he was kind and obliging in proportion as his predecessor had been cruel and arbitrary. Abd es Samery became rich and influential. Hussein Aga continued in office during only one year, and his departure is lamented to this day. Assaad Bek *et Tokan* now took the reins of government in Nablous; and although he manifested an outward show of kindness to Abd es Samery, he was inwardly jealous of his influence, and sought for a means of his disgrace. In the year 1243 (A.D. 1828), Assaad Bek went to Damascus, and at his urgent request (probably by means of a bribe) obtained from Joseph Pasha, the Governor General of Syria, residing in that city, an order that Abd es Samery should be fined the sum of 40,000 piastres,† and be sent handcuffed to Damascus. On

* The first Turk who had been appointed here. It is still very unusual for this district to be under the immediate government of the Turks, as they very rarely understand the *intricacies* of the Arab character.

† At that time equal to about £400 sterling.

his way home Assaad Bek rested himself at Beit Uzza, a village about seven miles to the north-east of Nablous. There he met a rival Sheikh named Mohammed Kasim er Rayan, a sworn friend of the Samaritans, who, suspecting that Assaad Bek had some scheme on foot against his friend Abd es Samery, after coffee and compliments said—"I hope, Assaad Bek, that you have brought with you an order for the disposal of that infidel Abd es Samery, who has ruined Djebal Nablous with his corruptions and intrigues." "Why," said he, "I feared that you would oppose me in it, or I would have done so." "Not I, indeed," said Mohammed Kasim, with assumed anger, "I detest the rascal too much to oppose you in so noble a scheme; have you brought such an order or not?" After much altercation, the Mutsellim, feeling confidence in Mohammed in consequence of the contemptuous way in which he spoke of the Samaritan, imparted to him the secret, and told him the nature of the Pasha's order, and shortly rode on to Nablous.

On arriving there (it being Saturday) he did not immediately send for Abd es Samery, concluding that he would visit him as usual after sunset.

Mohammed Kasim, however, lost no time in his endeavour to rescue his friend from the clutches of the Mutsellim, so sent a special horseman to Abd es Samery desiring him to meet him at Beit Uzza immediately, that if the Henna (a red or black dye) were on his fingers, he was not to wash it off till his arrival at Beit Uzza; and conjuring him to start immediately, notwithstanding the Sabbath. This injunction was

obeyed, and Abd es Samery started for Beit Uzza without even informing his relatives.

Assaad Bek waited until after sunset, but as Abd es Samery did not make his appearance, he sent his servant to seek him, who returned after a fruitless search in Nablous. He was therefore despatched to Beit Uzza, Assaad Bek saying to him, "Tell nobody of your real errand ; merely see whether that infidel Abd es Samery is in Mohammed Kasim's house ; but in case of your being asked your errand, say that your master lost his ring near Beit Uzza, and that you are sent to seek it." The slave went as he was bidden, and found Mohammed Kasim seated at the door of his house, who, upon being told the feigned errand, said to the slave, "Go, tell your master that the ring (meaning the Samaritan) he seeks will never fall into his tyrannical possession again."

Mohammed el Kasim kept Abd es Samery at his house, at which the Governor and his party were fearfully enraged ; and the next day was the beginning of one of the direst and most bloody fights that ever took place in Djebal Nablous between the families of et Tokan and er Rayan : it lasted for fifty days, and several hundreds were slain on both sides—from which it is called the *Khamseeneeyeh*, or *the Fifty* ; and it is regarded to the present day as an epoch from which to reckon other events. The city of Nablous, as well as all the surrounding villages, was barricaded and divided into parties : at last, after a desperate struggle, the family of er Rayan came off victorious, and the Governorship of Nablous was taken by Sheikh Kasim el Ahmed, who, however, placed

his son Mohammed Kasim (above referred to) as his agent in the office.

A few months afterwards the sub-employés and secretaries of the district were called to Damascus; Abd es Samery went amongst the rest, taking with him my father, and the accounts and dues of Djebal Nablous and Jeneen; and after making up accounts with Joseph Pasha, and receiving an acknowledgment in full, the Pasha ordered him to prison (without assigning any reason), where he was detained for four months, after which time a celebrated and influential man, head secretary of the Pashalic of Damascus, Ibrahim Tannoos, and Ali Aga en Noonoo, exerted themselves for his release, which was effected upon the payment of P.4000 (= £40) to the Pasha. After his release, he was admitted to an interview with the Pasha, who asked him how he liked the prison. Abd es Samery replied, "As it was ordered by your Excellency, I was pleased with it, especially as during the monotonous leisure of a prison life I am thankful to say that I have studied and acquired the Turkish language, which will be of great use to me in my profession."

He then returned to Nablous, where he was welcomed by the Governor's family; his own relations rejoiced greatly to see him, as they had feared that the tyrant Joseph Pasha would strangle him.

The families of el Rayan and Abd ul Hady now remained on terms of friendship for some time, the Governorship continuing in the hands of the former. But although

friendship was openly professed, a factious spirit was hot in their breasts; and Abd ul Hady, inflamed by jealousy, paid his respectful visit of ceremony to Abdallah Pasha immediately on his being proclaimed Pasha in Acre, in 1246 (A.D. 1831), with whom he laid plots for the overthrow of his rivals of the Jerrar family, who were wealthy, numerous, and powerful—possessing a strongly fortified village named Sennoor, situated on a hill difficult of access; and had lately formed a compact with the Rayan family. The Pasha summoned the heads of all the rival families. The family of er Rayan were afraid to go, but sent Abd es Samery in company with Hussein Abd ul Hady. Assaad Bek et Tokan and Mustafa Bek et Tokan went as representatives of their family. The family of Jerrar, fearing the intrigues of Abd ul Hady, did not venture to obey the summons.

Hussein Abd ul Hady finding that he had succeeded in keeping the family of Jerrar away from the Pasha, now represented to His Excellency that they were a set of rebellious robbers, holding a fortified city, setting all superior Governors at defiance; and moreover, intimated that it would be but right that His Excellency should punish them. So Abdallah Pasha wrote to them, saying that unless the elders of the family immediately repaired to Acre, he would himself ride with his army and take the village by storm. They sent back a very insolent answer to the effect that their defence was powder and shot, but that in case His Excellency had not enough, they would lend him some, to be returned at the end of the fight. His Excellency, enraged, immediately collected all his forces, and sent his Vizier to storm the village of Sennoor; but from the

sturdy hardihood and bravery of the peasantry of the family of Jerrar, and the extreme difficulty of access to the village, the Vizier besieged it for thirty days without any result other than the loss of his ammunition and provisions. Abdallah Pasha then went in person, taking with him much heavy artillery, and claiming the assistance of the Emir Besheer and the Druses from Mount Lebanon. He built a small tower on an adjacent hill-side, but, after a siege of several months, was obliged to make a truce with the family of Jerrar through the mediation of other Sheikhs ; peace was thus effected on terms of great humiliation to Abdallah Pasha, who, upon returning to Acre, was greatly enraged with Hussein Abd ul Hady, and accused him of having by his intrigues caused disgrace to the Government, the loss of many lives and much ammunition and provisions. Hussein, fearing that his life was in danger, made his escape to his village Arabeh, which was quite as strongly fortified as Sennoor, but not so well situated. Some horsemen were sent after him, but he was safely lodged before they arrived.

Circumstances seemed now to conspire against the unfortunate secretary Abd es Samery, who, although only 52 years of age, had suddenly become white-headed during the conflict. Mustafa Bek et Tokan and his cousin Assaad Bek *et Tokan* now sought to curry favour with Abdallah Pasha : they began by representing to His Excellency that Abd es Samery had been the instrument of the flight and escape of Sheikh Hussein. His Excellency, therefore, immediately sent for Abd es Samery, and ordered him to be beheaded. But Antone Catafago, a man of considerable influence, interceded for him, and his execution

was commuted to imprisonment till the return of Sheikh Hussein Abd ul Hady. Assaad Bek et Tokan now came to Abd es Samery, representing to him that he was at death's door, that one word from Antone Catafago or from himself would be the means of his immediate execution: thus he commenced by alarming him, and then asked him to swear upon the Pentateuch and the sword that he would befriend him and never oppose him in any of his plans in case of his obtaining the Governorship of Nablous; concluding his remarks by saying that, in return for the oath, he would directly get him released and reinstalled in his Secretaryship in Nablous. Abd es Samery and Assaad Bek *et Tokan*, therefore, took the prescribed oath not to oppose or deceive each other, but always to remain steadfast friends.

Sheikh Hussein *Abd ul Hady* after his flight had taken the oath of friendship with the family of er Rayan, and these united to lay plans for the destruction of the Tokan family.

The Pasha, at the request of Antone Catafago, released Abd es Samery from prison; and afterwards, on consideration of a large bribe, granted the Governorship of Nablous to Assaad Bek *et Tokan*, dismissing his family and Abd es Samery in new dresses.*

Upon their arrival in Nablous Assaad Bek *et Tokan* pub-

* An Oriental custom when any inferior officer is restored to favour.

lished the tidings of his Governorship in all the villages of the district, that the petty Sheikhs might visit him ; but not one obeyed the summons. Hussein *Abd ul Hady*, perceiving the extreme unpopularity of Assaad Bek, and being on friendly terms with Antone Catafago, applied for and obtained the necessary documents for the Governorship of Nablous. He repaired to Nablous, but Assaad Bek *et Tokan* of course resisted; Hussein attacked him with a large body of men, and was victorious after a severe conflict, which lasted for a fortnight. Abd es Samery retained his office of Inspector and Superintendent of the Treasury.

Joseph el Kasimer Rayan, son of Kasim el Ahmed, was now Governor of Jerusalem; and after he had held the office for some time, news arrived of the approach of Ibrahim Pasha.

The whole faction of Kasim el Ahmed and Abd ul Hady met in council in Nablous, to consult as to what should be done in regard to Ibrahim Pasha, but they parted much divided in opinion.

Hussein Abd ul Hady went out to meet and welcome Ibrahim Pasha, and even remained with him as a guide. Kasim and party went to Jerusalem to oppose him.

In 1247 (A.D. 1832), Ibrahim Pasha took Nablous by sword; Hussein Abd ul Hady remained as Mutsellim, and Abd es

Samery retained his office with much influence during the Egyptian government.*

It being known that Abd es Samery had been formerly on terms of friendship and intimacy with the family of Kasim Rayan, he was compelled by threats to show the property and treasures of that house, which were confiscated to the Government of Ibrahim Pasha, who decapitated Joseph el Kasim and Mohammed el Kasim in Acre, serving their father Kasim el Ahmed, and another Sheikh named Burkawy, in the same manner in Damascus.

The son of Hussein *Abd ul Hady*, Suleiman el Hussein, was now made Governor, under whom (Abd es Samery being much respected, and having great influence) the Paschal†

* In 1831, Mohammed Ali Pasha, Viceroy in Egypt, sent his son Ibrahim Pasha to Palestine, with a view to wresting it, and as much more of the Turkish territory as possible, from the hands of H.M. the Sultan. He is said to have sworn to place his horse on the Imperial throne of Constantinople.

† During the days of unleavened bread, the Samaritans live in tents on Mount Gerizim, near the site of their ancient temple. On the 15th day of the month, the congregation being assembled, the priest stands forth on a mound, and reads, in a most solemn and impressive voice, the animated description of the Exodus.

The labourers having previously prepared a trench of ten feet long by two feet deep, and two feet wide, on which two cauldrons of water are placed, fire being kindled in the trench, and a round pit dug in the form of a well for a bake oven, in which fire is kindled, lambs are brought in sufficiency for the whole community:—seven is now the usual number. Seven men, in white dresses, take each a lamb before him, and at the utterance by the priest of a particular word in the service appointed for

lamb was again slain on Mount Gerizim, instead of its being done in secret, as had been recently the case from fear.

In the year 1249 (A.D. 1834), my father died, and I, at the age of five years, was taken under the special care and protection of my great uncle Abd es Samery.

In 1254 (A.D. 1839), under the government of Ibrahim Pasha, such incessant trouble was given to the Government employés, by rigid examinations, in consequence of suspected dishonesty and trickery in some of the offices, that my uncle Abd es Samery sent in his resignation through the hands of Hussein Abd ul Hady, who afterwards employed him as private secretary.

In 1256 (A.D. 1841), Suleiman Abd ul Hady received private

the day, all seven lambs are slain at one instant. Every member of the congregation then dips his hand in the blood of the dying victim, and besmears his forehead with it. The boiling water from the cauldrons being poured over the fleece, causes the wool to leave the skin without much difficulty: it is plucked off with great nicety.

The bodies of the lambs are examined, lest there be any blemish; the right shoulder and the hamstrings are cut off and thrown on the heap of offal, to be burnt with the wool. The seven bodies are then spitted and forced into the hot bake oven. A trellis-work is then placed over the top of the oven, which is covered with grass and mud to keep in all the heat.

A few hours after sunset they are withdrawn, and the Samaritans, each with his loins girt and a staff in his hand, eats most hastily and greedily of the food thus prepared.

The scraps of meat, wool, and bone, are carefully sought for and burnt on the heap, that not a morsel remain.

intelligence that Acre had been retaken by the Turkish Government from the Egyptians in a grand bombardment by English ships of war. He was a calculating man, so, fearing a revolt, he fled during the night.

On the morrow a panic seized the people ; the town was all in commotion, townspeople and villagers all up in arms, to fight against they knew not what. They soon, however, found an object, and came to the resolution that, as Ibrahim Pasha was conquered, they would endeavour to destroy all his employés, and they immediately seized and murdered five officers wearing Egyptian uniform, and dragged them ignominiously through the streets.

Our family having been also in the Pasha's service, our lives were in danger ; we therefore concealed ourselves, and gradually appeased the fury of the populace, by buying the interest of the ringleaders and principal Ulemas or learned men of the Moslems.

A man named Sheikh Sadik of Medgdel succeeded as Governor, but he only remained in office for three days, for Suleiman in his flight had visited Acre, and by favour and bribery obtained from the Turkish Vizier the necessary credentials for his reinstalment as Mutsellim under the new government.

The head people of Nablous remembered the oppression of Suleiman during the government of Ibrahim Pasha : they went in a body to Damascus, where was the residence of the Governor General, to whom they protested against Suleiman,

and begged to have him displaced. Suleiman *Abd ul Hady* was therefore summoned; he was accompanied by my uncle and myself, and by means of the united influence of our friends and of pecuniary presents to the various members of the Council, Suleiman was confirmed in his office, and we returned triumphantly to Nablous.

On the road Suleiman was taken ill, and remained so for many days after his arrival in Nablous, where, after thirty-six days of severe suffering, which had brought him to the point of death, two opposing Sheikhs came to visit him,—Mustafa el Eessa and Suleiman Bek *et Tokan*, his direst enemies. The Governor, although actually dying, would not allow himself to be seen in low spirits, or by any means in a dejected condition, by his rivals, lest they should have the satisfaction of glorying in his fall; on their entrance he summoned up his courage, assumed a fictitious strength, and sat up in bed; ordered pipes and coffee to be brought for the visitors, and talked to them as heartily as if he were recovering rather than dying. But the exertion was too much for him, as, after taking leave, they had not passed more than the distance of four or five doors down the street, when the shrill cries of the women of the household announced to them that Suleiman *Abd ul Hady* was no more. This fact demonstrates the excess to which the factious spirit is carried in this peculiar district, Djebal Nablous, as well as the strong determined character of the heads of those factions, the ancient Arab families of the Moslem religion.

Mohammed *el Hussein Abd ul Hady*, who had been with

the rest in Damascus to complain against his late brother Suleiman, was next appointed to the Governorship.

A little while previous to this, a Samaritan widow had been decoyed by some influential Moslem, and she embraced the faith of Mohammed. She had a son and daughter, who remained with us; but the Ulemas decreed that they must follow the religion of their mother: the Governor Mohammed, however, would not consent to this compulsion, and strenuously opposed them. The Ulemas, enraged at an act which to them appeared in direct opposition to the dictates of their religion, induced Mahmoud *Abd ul Hady* (the Governor's uncle) to repair to Damascus, where, by means of bribery and misrepresentation, he obtained the Governorship for himself, his nephew being displaced.

Upon the triumphant arrival of Mahmoud in Nablous, the Ulemas assembled and told him that if he wanted their favour he must endeavour to purify and thoroughly cleanse the city from the Samaritan religion, but first of all must oblige the son and daughter of the Samaritan widow immediately to embrace the "religion of resignation" (*Deen el Islam*). This he promised, and sought to make the children submit. The boy was about fourteen years old, and after a fortnight's imprisonment, with threats and frequent lashes, he embraced the Mohammedan religion, but the girl died from fright of the dreadful torture about to be inflicted upon her. The boy's name was Isaac, and he is now known throughout Djebal Nablous under the newly adopted Mohammedan name of Assaad. After the submission of this youth,

the Ulemas assembled and conspired to murder the whole Samaritan people unless they would embrace the Moslem faith. There happened to be present a Samaritan named M'Barak, who, alarmed at what he heard, and being threatened, at once confessed faith in Mohammed. He was carried in triumph through the city on horseback, whilst his former co-religionists were being sought for. These, however, had obtained information of the scheme on foot, and some of them fled, whilst others concealed themselves. The plea upon which the Mohammedan Ulemas acted thus, was, that the Samaritans had no religion at all, not even believing in any one of the five inspired books, which are:—1. The Tora, or Law of Moses; 2. The Angeel, or New Testament; 3. The Zaboor, or Psalms; 4. The Anbeeyah, or Prophets; and 5. The Koran of Mohammed. A sect which acknowledges the inspiration of any one of these five books is legally tolerated by the Mohammedans. This being known to the Samaritans, they endeavoured to prove their belief in the Pentateuch, but the Mohammedans, not being acquainted with the Holy Tongue, disbelieved them. They then applied to the Chief Rabbi of the Jews in Jerusalem (a recognised representative and head of the Jewish faith), who immediately gave them a written declaration certifying "That the Samaritan people is a branch of the Children of Israel, who acknowledge the truth of the Tora." This document, backed by pecuniary presents, appeased the fury of the fanatics.

The Samaritans during their concealment gave to the Mohammedans money, plate, and jewelry to the amount of nearly £1000; after which they began by degrees to reappear

in public. All this occurred during the Governorship of Mahmoud Abd ul Hady, who was displaced in the year 1260 (A.D. 1842) ; when an influential member of the *Tokan* family, Suleiman Bek *et Tokan*, ruled in his stead : as he had often assisted us, we were delighted to hear of his appointment. At the end of the first year Suleiman Bek, accompanied by four members of our family, went to Beyrout to render up accounts. After the settlement, Suleiman Bek was cast into prison, but we could never discover for what reason. We were ordered to return to our official duties, in company with a new Governor, a Turk ; but we feared lest the natives of Nablous should accuse us of having by intrigue obtained the discharge and imprisonment of Suleiman Bek. The command, however, was repeated, with threats of imprisonment if we refused to obey ; so we started with the new Governor, and journeyed with him as far as Caiffa (a small sea-port town at the foot of Mount Carmel, of very little importance at that time, but which is now increasing in size, and progressing in mercantile affairs), where we heard that Djebal Nablous was much excited at the intelligence of the imprisonment of Suleiman Bek. We requested the new Governor to proceed to Jaffa with his train, and thence to Nablous. We went to Teerey, and thence to Igzim, and having found Mohammed Bek el Maady (an influential Mutsellim in the district of Atleet and Caiffa), we asked his advice as to our future proceedings. He said, " You had better go direct to Nablous." We did so, and our worst fears were realised. The country was up in arms. We were objects of universal displeasure, suspected as we were of having been the instruments of Suleiman Bek's disgrace. We made equivocal

answers to the numerous questions put to us, and then concealed ourselves in cellars and vaults, where we remained for many days; by night we sent four delegates to Mustafa Bek *et Tokan*, brother of Suleiman Bek, begging his assistance; and, having supplied him with a bag of money, he appointed his brother Emeen Bek to protect us.

The new Turkish Governor Moossa Aga went from Jaffa to Jerusalem, but did not dare to enter Djebal Nablous, and Emeen Bek remained with us for about a month.

The Pasha of Jerusalem came to Nablous for the purpose of quelling the disturbance; but the people would not be satisfied unless Suleiman Bek were sent back to his post, or the justice of his imprisonment proved to them. The Government in Beyrout, therefore, considered it the best policy to send back Suleiman Bek, and thousands of the inhabitants went out to meet him, his popularity being now greater than ever; and we were reinstated in our offices, of which we had been deprived by our absence and concealment. The Governor General sent a special order that for the future the responsibility of the Treasury should devolve entirely upon my uncle, Abd es Samery; the Mut-sellim having hitherto been the responsible agent.

A.H. 1259 (A.D. 1841).—In the year 1841, *i. e.* one year after the overthrow of the Egyptian Government in Syria, a Scotch gentleman named Dr. Wilson arrived in Nablous, and made great inquiries for Jacob's Well, and, having found out the exact spot, he hired ten strong men and myself to ac-

company him thither; and, in passing through the bazaar he purchased four camel ropes. I could not understand all this preparation, but on arriving at the mouth of the well I soon discovered the reason. It appeared that one of the Scotch Missionaries had some years ago dropped his Bible into the well, which Dr. Wilson was now so anxious to extricate. The men were soon set to work to remove the huge stones from the mouth of the well, and I was chosen, as being of light weight, to be lowered down for the search. I was much afraid at first. However, I consented upon some consolatory words and pecuniary persuasion, and a promise to take me to England made by Dr. Wilson. The rope was therefore tied round the waist, and I swung round (having no means of steadying myself) until I was quite giddy and faint from the impurity of the air. The four camel ropes were joined together, and still I had not reached the bottom; two shawls, which composed the turbans of two Samaritans who were with us, were then tied to the end of the rope, and by that means I alighted safely, but much frightened and overcome. The bottom of the well was muddy, but no water was there at this time, as the spring was dry. The well, which is a circular shaft, is cut out of the solid rock, and is 75 feet deep. Dr. Wilson had given me two beautiful white candles and a small box of sticks. The sticks were for the purpose of making a light. This was the first introduction of lucifer matches into Nablous. I had seen Dr. Wilson make use of one up above in the open air, and was much surprised; but now, down in this dark place, upon striking the end of one against the rough side of the box, I was amazed at the report and ignition, and made up my mind not to waste any, but to keep

the box carefully in my pocket, and I thought that this box alone would fully compensate for my trouble in coming down. I had been told to remove all the stones from east, and to place them westwards, and then to return them to their original position, and to place in the east those from the west; and in executing the latter command, I found a dirty little book about 6 in. long by 4 in. broad, and $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick. Dr. Wilson shouted down from the mouth several times, "Have you found it?" The same answer, "No," was continued for some time, but now I did not exactly know how to answer: "this could not be the book," I thought, "for the recovery of which he had expended so much labour and money, and yet he might, if it were a book of necromancy, for guiding him to hidden treasures." When Dr. Wilson heard that I had found something, he caused me to be hauled up, and welcomed me and my treasure, which I felt almost ashamed to give him; yet he was much delighted, patting me on my back and paying all the men as well as myself very handsomely. He wrapped the Bible in a handkerchief, and deposited it in his breast-pocket most carefully. It was currently believed that this was a book of necromancy, just as it had struck me when in the well. This little fact is related in Dr. Wilson's valuable book called "Lands of the Bible."

In 1263 (A.D. 1847), a special accountant was sent from Beyrout to examine the state of all the Treasuries in Syria. He came to Nablous in company with Mustafa Zereef Pasha, and amongst the accounts one was found showing that we had paid the sum of 72,000 piastres, according to the cheque drawn by the Treasurer, who had held office during our tem-

porary concealment: we had this cheque in hand, acknowledged and endorsed by the recipient of the sum; but the late Treasurer had absconded, and it devolved upon us either to find him or to pay the sum—so it was placed to our debit till the man could be found. The presence of Suleiman Bek as Governor, he being our friend and protector, set our minds at ease, and, considering his knowledge of all the circumstances of the case, we thought the missing sum would be looked over; or, perhaps, more correctly, relying upon him we thought no more about it, and remained in peace and plenty for several years, performing our annual sacrifice of the Paschal lamb on Mount Gerizim, according to the tenets of our religion.

In 1264 (A.D. 1848) I was sent to be Treasurer and Superintendent of Stores in the district of Jeneen, a fertile country, including part of the plain of Esdraelon, the Mountains of Gilboa, and the Mount Ephraim, with forty-five villages, where I remained (sometimes acting as Governor during the temporary absence of the appointed one, who was of the Jerrar family) until the year 1267 (1851). Several of my relations were at the same time in office in the district and town of Nablous. After having been here for about a year, I was one evening seated with the Mutsellim, when we were informed that some English official was encamped in the garden under the large mulberry-tree, near the Jeneen spring. I immediately took two water-melons and presented them to the weary travellers, and thus commenced my valuable acquaintance with Mr. E. T. Rogers, who was

at that time in an official appointment at Jerusalem, whence he has been since removed to a more important station at Caiffa.

In that memorable year 1267 (A.D. 1851), the family of Abd ul Hady having, during the past seven years, strengthened itself considerably, the younger members, having arrived at maturity, sought opportunities to take revenge upon the family of Tokan for the success and popularity enjoyed by Suleiman Bek. They assembled in many villages for the purpose of extirpating all the followers of that family. I was myself an eye-witness of much slaughter between the two factions. The family of Tokan was assisted by that of Jerrar, and part of the family of Rayan, in repelling the advances made by Abd ul Hady, who had called in some wild Arab tribe to assist: the family of Tokan also called in a tribe of Bedouin Arabs. A sanguinary fight ensued: it lasted for about three months, during which time about 500 people were killed, and as many were wounded. Tokan came off victorious, and now Abd ul Hady bribed the Government to send Mohammed Pasha with his cavalry, and pitch his camp near Nablous; who summoned the elders of the contending parties under the pretence of making peace between them; but immediately upon their being all seated within his state tent, he gave the word of command, when a company of soldiers entered, who took them prisoners. He sent them bound to Beyrout, guarded by a detachment of about 400 cavalry. The names of the eight who were thus ignominiously arrested were—

Of the family of Tokan :—

Suleiman Bek et Tokan (the Governor),
Mustafa Bek et Tokan,
Abdallah Bek et Tokan.

Of the family of Abd ul Hady :—

Mohammed el Hussein Abd ul Hady,
Abd el Kader Abd ul Hady.

Of the family of Jerrar :—

Kasim el Mohammed.

Of the family of Rayan :—

Sadik el Mustafa,
Ibrahim el Burkawey (a friendly Sheikh of no
great influence).

From Beyrout they were transported by steam to Constantinople, whence they were sent to Trebizond, where they still remain, with the exception of Mohammed el Hussein and his brother Abd el Kader, and Kasim el Ahmed, who have lately escaped and returned to Nablous.

Orders were at that time proclaimed that none of either family should ever again fill any important office in Djebal Nablous.

But Mahmoud Bek Abd ul Hady now endeavoured by means of bribery to ingratiate himself into the favour of

Mohammed Pasha ; he gave him 500 purses (£2500), and he was then appointed Mutsellim in Nablous, notwithstanding the recent proclamation.

Immediately on his appointment he commenced a bitter and underhanded persecution of all those who had been in any way connected with Suleiman Bek. He got the peasantry of his party to depose that Abd es Samery had been in the habit of extorting money from them in the name of Suleiman Bek, which unfounded accusation, together with others equally false, and the transportation of his friend and benefactor (the late Governor), coming upon him within a short space of time, had such an effect upon him in his declining years, that he died broken-hearted in the year 1267 (A.D. 1851).

Mahmoud Bek soon found that this plan was useless : he devised another to satisfy his revenge ; he invited us to his presence, condoled with us on the death of Abd es Samery, and then offered the appointment of Treasurer to Israel, the son of the late Abd es Samery, which, notwithstanding the irregular state of the books, he accepted, in consequence of the kindly-worded promises of Mahmoud Bek.

But in the course of two or three months, before the Treasury could receive any of its revenue, an examination was instituted, and by the cross-questioning of several members of the Council and Abd ul Hady's faction, a deficiency of 112,000 pias. was proved against us, including, however, the 72,000 above alluded to. The account ran thus :—

To a non-accepted cheque from the absconded Treasurer	72,000
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To sums remaining due from the village taxes and expenses which the Government did not acknowledge, notwithstanding having been incurred by order of the Governor .	39,000
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Piastres	111,000
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We were ordered immediately to pay the deficiency: all the valuables of the family were sold by public auction,—our jewelry, furniture, copper kitchen utensils (with which Arab families are generally very plentifully supplied), and, indeed, everything that would realise any value: yet still the enormous debt was not nearly covered; consequently, Israel was imprisoned and tortured. I went off to Jerusalem and delivered a petition to Mr. Finn, H.B.M. Consul, who, in answer to it, as well as upon several other occasions, remonstrated in our behalf with the Mutsellim, upon which the torture was for a time abandoned, to be renewed within a few days.

A Petition was then drawn up complaining of the Mutsellim's cruel treatment of Israel; it was signed by all our friends who knew anything of the circumstances. This petition I presented to the Pasha in Jerusalem. Next morning I met H.E.'s secretary, Selim Ayoub, who informed me that Mahmoud Abd ul Hady, on hearing that I was the bearer of a memorial against him, had written to the

Pasha, accusing me personally of those crimes which he before attributed to my uncle and cousin: this was, of course, to lower me in the estimation of the Pasha, and to prevent the effects of the memorial. I, therefore, according to the advice of the secretary, a very friendly man, took my departure without a second interview with the Pasha. I went to Jaffa, where I expected to find a vessel which would take me to Trebizond, to the presence of my late friends and employers, Suleiman Bek and his brothers; but during my stay in Jaffa, waiting for a vessel, some horseman arrived from Nablous who seized me and threw me into prison. On the morrow I was taken to Nablous, when I was brought before Mahmoud Bek, who rose on my entering his apartment, and said, "Welcome, O thou prime minister of Suleiman Bek; bring coffee and pipes for him." I said "I did not expect such politeness from you; I feel such flattery is not in my favour; but do what you please—he who is destined to live but a day will not live for two." He then began to threaten me, saying he would send me to Trebizond. I said that was my great desire, as I wished to be near my friends; and repeated to him the proverb of the wolf, who, upon being threatened, as a punishment, with being made a shepherd of sheep, began to cry and express a wish for the fulfilment of the threat. He then ordered me to prison, after having been severely bastinadoed in his presence.

I was heavily ironed, and the Governor caused me to be brought before him every day to be beaten, when he swore at me, and ordered me to inform him where the property of my uncle had been hidden. I could only tell him that all

the property of which we had been possessed, as far as I knew, had been sold to liquidate the debt made out against us ; but he was so angry with me for persisting in making the same answer every day, that he ordered my allowance of food to be reduced to one small cake a day (six or eight of which cakes would only form an ordinary allowance for a man). A number of Samaritans came to me frequently to consult as to what could be done for my release, but they were invariably searched lest they should bring me food.

They proposed that I should do everything in my power to pacify the anger and revenge of the Governor, so my mother offered for sale her house, which had cost her about £70, which, when sold by auction, only realised £25. This sum I sent up to the Governor, yet still he would not release me. I then wrote a secret letter to two confidential friends, for the twofold purpose of inquiring as to the Governor's feelings towards me, and of consulting about a remedy against his cruelty. The following is a translation of my letter :—

“ To my beloved Brethren —— and ——.

“ I am in great anxiety to see you both in good health and happiness. It is known to you that I am in prison, whither the soldiers brought me from Jaffa under arrest. I am in a great strait, firstly, from being in a very small dungeon ; and, secondly, from the great weight of the iron chains wounding my neck and legs. This is all caused by the rapacious spirit

of Mahmoud Bek Abd ul Hady, our present Governor, who, as you well know, is extremely tyrannical. I beg you of your brotherhood to give me information on two points :— First, What have you heard from the mouth of the tyrant above mentioned in regard to his feelings towards me, whether good or bad? Secondly, I wish you to advise me how to escape from the hands of this merciless man; for time is lengthening, and I want your advice as from one to his own brother, and this in the shortest time possible. May God preserve you.

“Your brother,

“JACOB ESH SHELABY.”

To this I received the following reply, which made me confident in the endeavour to carry out my preconceived plan :—

“To our Brother Jacob esh Shelaby.

“In anxiety to see you in good health and spirits, as well as in prosperity, we received your letter, which has added sorrow to your previous affliction, from the continuance of your imprisonment. We cannot express our extreme sorrow and trouble on account of our thoughts concerning your state, as we well know the callous disposition of the tyrannical and merciless Governor. Your imprisonment has been the topic of our conversation by day and by night, sorrowing over your

misfortune. The disposition of Mahmoud Bek is well known to all. You ask for information on two points. We answer the first by saying that the Governor has said before us, and before many others (whom we have asked as to whether he would be satisfied by any sum of money that could be given to him, who answered that no money would satisfy him), that his desire was to annihilate Jacob Shelaby from the earth. Secondly, our advice is, that if you can possibly effect it, your best plan is to flee from your prison. Pray do not let anyone see this our letter, but burn it lest it should fall into the hands of our enemies, whereby we might be punished with you by the great oppressor.

“God preserve you,

(Signed)

“Your brethren,

“—— and ——”

Having made up my mind what course to pursue, I dictated the following letter to my mother:—

“‘Do not enquire of occurrences how or why they happened; for that which is decreed must come to pass.’

“My dear Mother,

“I am, by the goodness of God, in the intention of effecting my escape if He permit it; therefore, henceforward, make no farther enquiries after me; for if God be propitious to me, I will let you know of my state in any town whither I may have fled—but if not, then God be praised for what He

has done already—you will then weep for me as Jacob wept over his son Joseph.

“ I have written this letter to you, whilst tears are running down my cheeks, stream after stream. We were together as the stars of heaven, but time has parted us, and we wander like shooting stars. I beg you to pray for my success.

“ Your son,

(Signed)

“ JACOB ESH SHELABY.”

I then, therefore, came to the conclusion that my only plan was to endeavour to effect my escape, even if I should lose my life in the attempt: I counted my fellow-prisoners, who amounted to fifteen, all of whom were securely ironed like myself, and, upon communicating to them my plan, they all rejoiced at the very idea of effecting an escape.

The next time my mother came to see me, I begged of her to bring me, by any means in her power, a strong file and an iron peg. This she succeeded in accomplishing very cleverly, much to our delight. As soon as the guards had retired, I went to work with my newly-acquired and invaluable implements, and before the fifth hour of the night, say 11 o'clock, every one of us was released from his bonds.

We were now, though free from our chains, still in confinement within stone walls.

The door could, perhaps, be easily opened, but several

guards were sleeping (as they should not have been) on the doorstep; some of the prisoners proposed to force the door and murder the sleeping guards; but I would not consent to stain my hands with blood, so I induced them to assist me in picking some of the stones from the wall, which we accomplished by means of the iron peg, and in the course of an hour and a half we were all safe through the hole we had thus made. Our next, but comparatively small difficulty, was to get out of the city. When we arrived at the bazaar we were alarmed by the night patrols, who gave us chase, close to our heels; and in our bewilderment we presently found that we had run back into the court of the very seraglio from which we had only just escaped with such difficulty; but, fortunately, a small gate on the opposite side had been left open by neglect, and afforded us egress, and on arriving at a part of the city wall which is rather lower than the rest, we, in our anxiety and eagerness, scaled it like cats.

I am certain I could not get over such a wall now, and am only surprised at myself, when I reflect that I really did surmount it without the aid of a ladder, rope, or anything of the kind.

So dear is Liberty.

Once in safety outside the town, I counted my companions, and found that four had been left behind, having either missed us in our precipitate escape, or having been overtaken by the guard.

One of our number was a Bedouin Chief, a Prince among his people.

We were now pursued by mounted patrols, but we took a rough stony cut up Mount Ebal, so that the horses could not possibly follow us. The horsemen cried out, conjuring us to leave behind the Bedouin Chief; we, however, refused to do so, considering that he had a right to share the same fate as his companions.

Before dawn we arrived at a village named Tubaz, where each one of us went into a house to beg a loaf of bread. We had agreed that if any one of us heard or saw any signs of pursuit, he was to give warning to the others by a sharp whistle. I had hardly got my loaf and a few eggs, when I heard the appointed signal, and we all soon assembled in the olive grove.

I found the cause of the summons was, that one of the party had discovered in the village a brother of Mahmoud Bek; and fearing lest we should be seized on suspicion, he proposed that we should immediately strike into the Ghor.*

We continued on our way, now running, now loitering to refresh ourselves at an occasional spring, or to seek for herbs among the grass, which, as it was spring time, were easily found.

* The plain of the Jordan bears this name.

We did not venture to take sleep or rest till after sunset ; and then we sat down on a rock to pass the night, without any addition to the scanty clothing which we wore during the day. There are three things, each of which would prevent sleep in any one ; and these three were ours—viz. fear, hunger, and cold.

On the following morning we again began our march, hardly knowing whither we directed our steps ; but on and on we journeyed until sunset, and then passed a second night under the spangled canopy of heaven, without any other food than herbs and water.

Next day we were delighted to perceive in the distance the black tents of some wild Arab tribe, for we were purposely avoiding the civilised habitations of townspeople. But, upon seeing them within about two hours from us, we all grew weary, and felt that we could walk no farther,—partly from sheer exhaustion, and partly, I believe, from the reaction caused by our confidence in finding ourselves so near to a temporary destination.

Two of our little party, however, who had been more inured to hard living and out-door exercise than the rest, offered to advance and inform the Arabs of the approach of travellers. On their arrival at the tents they found it to be the encampment of the very Chief who was with us, namely Ahmed el Karoot,—and immediately a large number of the Arabs, with saddle-horses for the weary, came forward to meet and welcome us ; and we were conducted to the tents amid the singing of the

women and gun-firing of the men. We were only seven who entered the encampment; the rest had gone off, each in the direction of his own residence. I remained with this tribe about two months, during which time (as I could not from religious scruples eat the meat which they had slaughtered) I took only bread and milk, and had no change of raiment; and at last, from exposure to cold, sleeping on damp grass, and taking only such light food, I became seriously ill. I was acquainted with a tribe near Nazareth, called the Hawara, and begged the Arabs to conduct me thither, which they did. My late fellow-prisoners had left me some time before.

A short time previous to my imprisonment I had received from Mustafa el Abdallah, nephew of Abd ul Hady, the sum of 100 gazis (equal to about £20) for partnership in the purchase of wheat: he heard of my being at Nazareth, and came to the Hawara demanding that I should be given up. This they refused, and Mustafa would not leave me without the payment of the 100 dollars. The two parties had much angry discussion, and at last I was seized and carried off to 'Arabeh. Then Mustafa ordered me to pay the money immediately. Though I offered him the receipt I had obtained from the peasant to whom I had paid the money in advance for the wheat, he would not take it; so I collected all old trifling and almost forgotten sums due to me, and during eight months' stay in his house I was allowed to earn a little money, all of which I paid him; so that there only remained about 30 gazis, or £6, for which sum a Samaritan friend became my guarantee; I was thereupon released. As I did not dare even yet to go to Nablous, I went round to Jeru-

saalem, where I applied for assistance to the English Consul, Mr. Finn, who was very kind to me; and I remained two months in the house of his dragoman, Mr. Moossa Tannoos. Then, hearing that Mahmoud Bek was displaced, I went to Nablous and found the whole of the Samaritan community in deep poverty, their houses mortgaged, and every valuable sold, Seeing no possibility of my being restored to my original appointment, I thought well to return to Jerusalem, and this time I was kindly received by Mr. Finn's cancellière (Mr. Rogers, who was afterwards appointed H.B.M. Vice-Consul in Caiffa), who cheered me up and lent me some money, with which I paid the balance due to Mustafa. I remained with him during the whole time of the Consul's summer encampment, viz. from May till October.

The last time I was in Nablous, the priest Amran asked me if I would undertake a journey to England for the collection of alms. I assented, and was much encouraged with the prospect of being allowed to go under the protection of my friend Mr. Rogers; and my hope is that the expectations of my brethren may be realised in the favourable reception given to me by the British public.

I brought with me two petitions, one addressed to the British Government, seeking protection, which has been very favourably responded to by H.M. Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Earl of Clarendon, his lordship having sent instructions to the Consuls resident in Palestine, expressing the interest which H.M.'s Government take in the Samaritans of Nablous, and directing them to afford, in case of

need, such protection as may be proper towards subjects of the Porte. His lordship at the same time instructed H.E. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to use his good offices with the Porte in favour of the Samaritan community.

I would conclude my little narrative with a copy of the Petition to the British Public, literally translated from the Arabic by Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers :—

Literal Translation of the Petition from the Samaritan Community, addressed to the English Public in the Arabic and Samaritan Languages.

“O God, we lift up to Thee our open hands in prayers and supplications, to Thee who art incomprehensible and incomparable; we conjure Thee by Him whom Thou wert pleased to create, and to whom thou revealedst the mystery of Thy Godhead, to vouchsafe to behold with the eyes of assistance, to protect and everlastingly preserve the lords and subjects of the illustrious Government of Great Britain, who by the means of Thy protection obtain wondrous grace. Be thou to them, O Lord God, a helper and aid, a preserver and faithful guard. So be it, O God! Amen.”

This petition to the threshold of the bountiful, the generous, sheweth that your servants, the Samaritan Community residing in Nablous, were formerly an extensive people, and respected in all lands; but those days have changed: the Government of the district inhabited by us is corrupt and unstable; the

Governors have had no pity upon our state, so that sorrow has fallen upon us in the course of time and fate, these same Governors having been in the habit of making our goods their spoil, and of punishing with fines, and stripes, and death, those who disobeyed their arbitrary commands. The population rose against us, and the whole people fell sorely upon us; and we have incurred heavy debts, as we were unable to flee from our home from the lack of liberty in another place, and, above all, we should be unable to carry out the commands of our religion elsewhere. Our affairs were very unprosperous, and clouds of darkness thickened around us, from our inability to undertake the trials of a journey from the home of our forefathers. Thus from the tyranny of our numerous changing Governors, we have gradually fallen into our present state, and we are so far annihilated that we have become very few in number, our males only amounting to sixty-five,* including men and boys. We therefore solicit your pity, being confident in your known mercy; therefore do not disappoint us of that which we expect from your charity; nay, do not turn us, your petitioners, empty away. By the representations from the travellers of your nation who have visited these lands, we, your petitioners, having become convinced of your merciful nature, your full and entire sympathy, and your universal and never-failing kindness, have thought well to address this petition, and to forward it by the hands of the bearer, one of the sons of our Community, Jacob esh Shelaby, our Agent and faithful Trustee: we hope that by him you will receive this

* The whole number of the Congregation, male and female, amounts to about 195.—E. T. R.

petition, that you will look on him with the eyes of mercy, and that you will exercise your never-failing charity ; we trust that you will exert your high influence, and we pray that your eyes may be ever rejoiced at beholding us hereafter, by your assisting us now in this time of need, to the means whereby we may be enabled to pay our debts, and become free from these incumbrances. You are the people of mercy and charity. We therefore beseech you to grant us your bountiful assistance, that you may thereby gain the grateful prayers of your servants, and the humble supplications of our children, at all times and in all seasons.

Signed and Sealed by the Chief Priest, AMRAN,

In the name of the Samaritan Community.

[L. S.]

This Petition is supported by recommendations from Mr. Consul Finn, of Jerusalem,—Dr. M'Caul, of St. Magnus Rectory, London Bridge, &c.—as follows:—

Recommendation in their favour by Mr. CONSUL FINN, of Jerusalem.

“ The Samaritan Congregation of Nablous being about to send a messenger to England for collection of alms in aid of their community, I do hereby testify that almost all their families are in a state of much poverty, particularly of late

years; and that they have uniformly shown kindness to English travellers arriving in their city.

"I am glad to mention Priest Amran, with his father Selâmeh (the correspondent of De Sacy many years ago) among my best friends in this country.

" (Signed and sealed) J. FINN,

"Her Britannic Majesty's Consul for Jerusalem and Palestine.

Jerusalem, April 13th, 1854."

Statement by Mr. VICE-CONSUL ROGERS, of Caiffa, in Palestine.

"The Samaritan Congregation (as well as most of the inhabitants of Palestine) were much impoverished by the failure of the crops in the year 1853.

"They therefore determined to send a messenger to England for the collection of alms.

"And upon its being known that I was about to undertake a journey to England on leave of absence, I was petitioned by the Samaritan Community to take charge of their messenger Jacob esh Shelaby, which I have accordingly done, and feel pleasure in recommending their appeal, having been personally acquainted with their wants and sufferings occa-

sioned by circumstances of oppression from the petty factious Governors of the neighbourhood.

“ (Signed) E. T. ROGERS,

“ Her Britannic Majesty’s Vice-Consul for Caiffa, &c.”

Contributions may be paid into the hands of Messrs. Barnett, Hoare, and Co., Bankers, 62, Lombard Street, who have kindly consented to open an account for this Fund.

Donations will also be received by the Rev. W. D. Veitch, M.A., Chaplain to the Right Rev. Dr. Gobat, Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, 26, Devonshire Terrace, Craven Hill, Paddington; by the Rev. George Fisk, LL.B., Preb. of Lichfield, Incumbent of Christ Chapel, St. John’s Wood, London; by Rev. Wm. Brock, 12, Gower Street, Bedford Square; by Mr. Edward Gellatly, No. 1, Albion Terrace, Commercial Road, Limehouse; by Mr. I. Falcke, No. 92, New Bond Street, London; and by Rev. C. Marriott, Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford.

The Rev. Dr. M’Caul, who is acquainted with the facts of the case, and takes much interest in the remnant of this ancient people, fellow-witnesses with the Jews to the truth of Scripture, commends their claims to Christian sympathy.

And I would now beg publicly to express my sincere thanks to those friends who have assisted me in my mission,

to many of whom I have been introduced through my friend
Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers :—

Right Rev. the Lord BISHOP of LONDON,
Right Hon. the EARL of SHAFTESBURY,
Most Noble the Marquis of BLANDFORD,
Sir CULLING EARDLY EARDLY, Bart. ;

P. Gellatly, Esq., and family ; A. J. B. Beresford Hope, Esq. ;
John Labouchere, Esq. ; Rev. Joseph Wolff, D.D., LL.D. ;
Rev. George Fisk, LL.B. ; Mrs. Teede, of Bath ; Rev. George
Williams, B.D., Senior Fellow of King's Coll. Cambridge ;
Rev. W. D. Veitch ; Rev. C. N. Mann, Brighton ; Rev. W.
Brock, Bloomsbury Chapel ; Rev. C. Marriott, Fellow of Oriel
Coll. Oxford ; the Vice-Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge ;
Rev. F. W. Wiggs ; Rev. Dr. Pusey, Regius Professor of
Hebrew ; Rev. Dr. J. Barrow ; Mrs. Landon, of Bath ; R. R.
Alexander, Esq. ; Miss Sawbridge, of Bath ; T. Walrond,
Esq. ; Rev. A. P. Stanley ; Rev. Dr. Cumming ; Rev. T.
Binney ; Dr. Acland ; Isaac and David Falcke, Esqrs. ; Rev.
E. B. Elliott, of Brighton ; Rev. H. V. Elliott, Brighton ; and
especially to Mr. W. G. Rogers, in whose family circle I have
been kindly received, and where I have been residing during
my stay in London.

The original official documents are in my hands, and I shall
be happy to show them to any who are interested in the sub-
ject, on their calling at the undermentioned address.

10, CARLISLE STREET, SOHO SQUARE :

12th April, 1855.

BOUND BY
BONE & SON,
76, FLEET STREET,
LONDON.



Shelaby, Jacob esh

Notices of the modern Samaritans, illustrated by Incidents in the Life of
Jacob esh Shelaby, gathered from him, and translated by M. E. T. Rogers

London 1855

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